National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Fagen, Mildred and Abel, House

other names/site number

Name of Multiple Property Listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

street & number 1711 Devonshire Lane ☐ not for publication

city or town Lake Forest ☐ vicinity

state Illinois county Lake zip code 60045

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: ___ **national** ___ **statewide** ___ **local**

Applicable National Register Criteria: ___ **A** ___ **B** ___ **C** ___ **D**

Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date

Illinois Department of Natural Resources - SHPO
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Fagen, Mildred and Abel, House — Name of Property

Lake, Illinois — County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- [X] private
- [ ] public - Local
- [ ] public - State
- [ ] public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

- [X] building(s)
- [ ] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
1	0	site
1	0	structure
0	0	object
4	0	**Total**

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC

Single Dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

WORK IN PROGRESS

DOMESTIC

Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Modern Movement

Wrightian

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Wood

Fagen, Mildred and Abel, House | Lake, Illinois

Name of Property | County and State

roof: Modified bitumin

other: Limestone

Fagen, Mildred and Abel, House | Lake, Illinois

Name of Property | County and State

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity).

Summary Paragraph

The Abel E. and Mildred Fagen House, designed by the architectural firm of Keck & Keck in 1948, is located at 1711 Devonshire Lane, in the southwest corner of Lake Forest, Illinois, in a 1979 subdivision of winding streets that was historically part of the Albert Lasker Estate. The property is accessed from the south side of West Old Mill Road, Between Telegraph Road and what became U.S. Rte. 94, the Tri-state Tollway by the later 1950s. It consists of two contributing buildings, one contributing structure and one contributing site. The house, pool house and pool which were originally sited on 92 acres, rest on a 2.7-acre lot.[1] When the house was constructed its address was 1581 W. Old Mill Road. Accessed from a gentle rise, the entrance to the house faces northeast. It is generally oriented so that hallways line the walls adjacent to the north side of the house and all major public rooms face southeast, south or southwest—located to follow the azimuth of the sun. The pool house with an irregular shape and pool are located at the east end of the property.

The house was part of the Modern Movement, with Wrightian influences. It stands one story, is topped by a flat roof and has an irregular shape with sections of the house laid out on the diagonal, in keeping with the several passive solar elements incorporated in Keck's design for the house. The house is long and low, with a horizontal orientation. Most of its exterior is sheathed in variegated Tennessee limestone in tones of yellow, buff, pink and gray. Stones are rough faced and tend to be long and narrow, reinforcing the horizontal emphasis of the house. The walls of the garage, its adjacent storage area and the southeast wing are faced in stained horizontal cedar boards with beveled edges. Horizontality is further emphasized by broad eaves, many of which end in pointed overhangs. Clerestory windows line the walls of the hallways; floor to ceiling Thermopane glass walls form the exterior walls of the major living areas. There are louvered openings backed by screens and wood panels flanking the windows.

The design of the interior of the house is driven by function. It contains twelve living spaces, many of which have irregular shapes. The living/dining area and master bedroom/dressing area have an open plan. Built-in cabinetry is found in many of the rooms.

The house has excellent integrity. The exterior stone and wood cladding, windows, doors and ventilation louvers are all intact. The interior public spaces and bedrooms are also largely intact. Most of the built

[1] The size of the property the Fagens purchased was confirmed in a telephone interview with David Lawrence, the Fagens' son, August 2, 2020.

ins remain. Changes over the years have been minor and include the replacement of some flooring in the living spaces and removal and modification of some of the cabinetry.

Narrative Description

The Fagen House is located in the southwest corner of the city of Lake Forest, Vernon Township, in Lake County. It is approximately 30 Miles north of Chicago. The 2010 Census indicates that the population was 19,375. It is surrounded by the western shore of Lake Michigan on the east, Lake Bluff, Knollwood and Rondout on the north, Libertyville, Vernon Hills, Mettawa and Lincolnshire on the west and Highwood, Highland Park and Bannockburn on the south. The area where the Fagen property was built was located just west of the boundary of Lake Forest. Much of the adjacent area was annexed to the City of Lake Forest in 1926. From the early part of the 20th Century, area that had been farmed by pioneers was transitioning to estates that were gentleman's farms and into early suburban development.[2]

The City of Lake Forest has always been considered a suburb of Chicago. The east part of the city, from Lake Michigan to the Metra (formerly the Chicago & North Western Railway) tracks and from Lake Forest cemetery on the north and Westleigh Road on the south was the incorporated February 26, 1861. The area to the west of Green Bay Road remained outside the boundary of Lake Forest until 1912. Although the area where the Fagen House was constructed was annexed to the city of Lake Forest in 1926, white settlement of the area took place beginning in the 1830s. At that time many Irish grew up in the vicinity

[2] Susan Kelsey and Arthur H. Miller and Shirley M. Paddock. *West Lake Forest*, Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2012. 7

of Waukegan and Everett Roads in the settlement known as Everett. The area was largely dairy farms, which grew in popularity after the Civil War.[3] Over the years, these farms were replaced by gentleman's farms owned by executives of Chicago businesses or the children of prominent Chicago families. Small vernacular farmhouses were replaced by country estates designed by famous architects with elaborate gardens and complementary outbuildings. Among them were J. Ogden Armour's Melody Farm, Arthur Meeker's Arcady Farm, Samuel Insull's property (which became the Cuneo Estate), A. Watson Armour's Elewa Farm, Cllifford Leonard's Meadowood and advertising magnate Albert Lasker's sprawling country estate, which was known as "Mill Road Farm". Started in 1926, it had 26 outbuildings designed by David Adler who was the architect of choice among many Lake Forest residents. It included a working farm and an 18-hole golf course.

SETTING

The site of the 92-acre parcel of property Abel and Mildred Fagen purchased had been part of the 480-acre Lasker Estate. The Fagens' land was located on the south side of Old Mill Road. It was across the road from the larger plot of land where the 32,000 square foot manor house and its associated gardens, wooded landscapes, golf course and numerous Adler-designed outbuildings were located. That section, to the north of Old Mill Road, included a 300-seat theater, 12 car garage and most of the farm buildings. The land the Fagens bought, to the south, had originally included the stables for polo ponies and a herd of prized Guernsey cows as well as an Adler-designed chicken coop for 2,000 chickens. Naming it "Dream Farm," the Fagens purchased their tract of land for $30,000 in 1943 from the University of Chicago.[4] Advertising magnate Albert Lasker was a trustee of the university and gifted it to the school in 1940. The house the Fagens built was approached from a circular driveway up a slight elevation so that the house had a somewhat prominent presence on the site. It was situated in one of several groves of trees, completely screened from the road, which was about 1500 feet away.[5] Today the house, pool house, pool and landscape site are all contributing elements situated on the approximately 2.7 acre lot near the center of the Wedgewood Subdivision, whose winding streets and cul-de-sacs are accessed off Old Mill Road.[6] The James Anderson Company platted the property for Surety Builders, Inc. of Woodridge, Illinois.

[3] Ibid. 59

[4] Al Chase, "Lasker Home, Part of Farm, Sold by U of C." *Chicago Tribune*, October 7, 1943:2.

[5] Catherine Morrow Ford and Thomas H. Creighton. *The American Home Today*. New York: Reinhold Publishing Corp., 1951, 87. Excerpted in Rommy Lopat, Arthur H. Miller Sarah Wimmer. "Postwar Modernism in Lake Forest", *The Lake Forest Preservation Foundation Newsletter*. Vol 2, No. 3, Fall, 2009. 5.

[6] This subdivision was recorded in Lake County, as Document 2034877 on November 20, 1979. The owner of record was American National Bank and Trust Company of Chicago, as Trustee under an agreement dated January 1, 1977 and known as Trust No. 39866. The process of subdividing the approximately 80 acres had been initiated five years earlier, however—in 1974-- by owner Abel Fagen. City of Lake Forest Plan Commission meeting minutes February 11, 1974. "Public hearing

The 2.7 acres includes the house, pool house, pool, remnants of the associated stone hardscape and sufficient wooded landscape to give the property privacy.

The lot is irregularly shaped, angled toward Devonshire lane. The house is oriented toward the street, with the poolhouse and pool sited to the south and east of the house.

The Fagen house is accessed from a gently rising circular driveway with contributing stone features. Extending to the north from the garage, at its northwest corner, is a 2' stone wall that projects from the west-facing wall of the garage. It turns back on an acute angle to form a triangular planter. To the east of the northeast corner of the house is a planter in the same configuration. Each is located adjacent to the circular driveway and frames it. Like that on the house, the stonework is variegated limestone laid horizontally. Each is capped by limestone slabs, with a slim projecting ribbon of striated grooved copper flashing between the stone base and limestone slabs that form a cap.

There appear to be few if any landscape features (perhaps a few planting beds) that can be attributed as historic although there are several contributing features that are historic stone hardscape elements that complement the house. At the rear there is a flat limestone patio with a concave curving edge that surrounds the kitchen/dining section of the house. To the west of the living area is a low stone wall extending out from the west wall of the living area topped by limestone slabs that steps down two low stairs to the grassy lawn southwest of the bedrooms. Beyond are two trees imbedded in a triangular stone planter with curving edges. The planter is 1-1/2' tall and topped by slender projecting stone slabs.

ARCHITECTURE

Built as a single-story house with a flat roof, it is comparable in size to other modern houses in Lake Forest. It has an irregular shape, with sections laid out on the diagonal—to specifically take advantage of the angles of the sun. Its design by the firm of Keck & Keck, reflects the firm's interest in incorporating passive solar energy in the creation of a functional modern house with no historic references.

Exterior

The exterior of the house facing the road is sheathed in variegated Tennessee limestone in tones of yellow, buff, pink and gray. Stones are rough faced and tend to be long and narrow, reinforcing the horizontal orientation of the house. The walls of the garage, its adjacent storage area and service area of the house are faced in stained horizontal cedar boards with beveled edges. Horizontality is further

regarding request by Mr. Abel Fagan for a change of zoning for property located on Old Mill Road adjacent to the Illinois Tollway" [6]

emphasized by broad eaves, many of which end in pointed overhangs. Small circular openings in the soffit beneath the roof vent the eaves and the underside of the roof. There are bands of single-glazed long, narrow, rectangular clerestory windows facing northwest and northeast and large rectangular panes of double-glazed windows facing southeast, south and southwest. The windows have fixed sash but have louvered openings backed by wood paneled doors and screens on the interior adjacent to the windows. Where there are bands of windows and three louvers in the clerestories, they are separated from the stone beneath them by weathered copper flashing in a striated grooved pattern similar to that on the planters flanking the driveway. The house has a stone chimney that services the boiler as well as a large stone fireplace in the living area and one in the study. Projecting from the chimney, it takes an oblong shape, angled like the general plan of the house.

The front of the house is formed by three walls of different lengths forming an obtuse angle. The longest wall, that is 66' long and faces northeast, consists of a tall stone base topped by the band of clerestory windows. Altogether there are ten windows alternating with bands of three wood louvers. They are topped by a wood fascia and set under a slim overhang. There is a stone pier at the north and northeast corner of this wall. The wall that terminates in a stone planter extends from the north pier. The clerestory windows and louvers open into a long hallway that connects the reception area of the house with two bedrooms and the master suite at the end of the hall.

The front entrance is located at the southeast end of this wall. A short stone wall that faces northwest contains the doorway. It terminates in an acute angle, with a wall running north-south, containing a floor to ceiling window. Beyond it, facing northeast is a large floor-to-ceiling window that allows for views into the reception area and the music area and dining area beyond. There is a deep overhang that terminates in a point at the end of an acute angle that protects the front entrance.

The center section of the obtuse angle of the house is 29' long and resembles the long wall that faces northeast. It also consists of a tall stone wall topped by slender clerestory double glazed windows alternating with bands of three louvers and topped by fascia and a shallow wood overhang. There are two windows and two bands of louvers. This wall ends in a service entrance to the house that faces northwest. Behind this wall is a narrow service corridor that extends from the reception area to the hobby room at the east end of the house. The kitchen, laundry and maid's room open into this hallway. Across from the maid's room entrance is a doorway to a large storage room.

The third wall facing the driveway contains a window to the storage area of the house and two garage bays that are staggered. The wall on this section of the front is sheathed in beveled cedar siding. It contains a single double-glazed window facing west with a louvered opening on the north side. The walls of the garage consist of horizontal beveled cedar siding. The garage doors are made of horizontal wood boards. There is a wood fascia connecting the corners of each garage and a deep overhang sheltering the bank of garages. The northwest wall of the garage is sheathed in the horizontal beveled cedar siding. It

has a slight overhang. The northeast planter extends out from the north end of this side wall of the garage.

The 37’ rear wall of the garage has a band of four double-glazed windows flanked by vertical bands of louvered openings. This entire wall, which faces east and also serves as the rear wall of the storage area is sheathed in beveled cedar siding.

The walls of the hobby room form an obtuse angle with a center fixed pane flanked by louvers on the walls facing northwest and northeast. There is a doorway facing east. Over the doorway is a deep overhang that terminates in a pointed acute angle. The deep overhang that begins at this place extends along all the walls of the house that face southeast, south, southwest and west.

The wall, which is 38’ long facing southeast contains large windows flanked by vertical panels of louvers. Beneath them there are walls approximately 5’ high consisting of beveled cedar siding. The openings light the southeast wall of the hobby room, the maid’s room, the laundry and the kitchen. This terminates the service area of the house.

There is a short span of wall facing east between the wall to the dining/living area Beyond, the 32’ wall of the dining area that face southeast consist of floor-to-ceiling double-glazed windows. Where the 20’ wall turns at an obtuse angle and faces southwest the floor-to-ceiling window is flanked by vertical louvers. This section and that facing west, which also contains a large double-glazed window flanked by vertical louvers, light the living area. At the north end of the living area the roofline is raised and contains a band of clerestory windows in oblique angles paralleling the southeast and southwest living room walls. There is an overhang that extends west from the living room area that terminates in an acute angle. This overhang rests on a triangular stone pier. To the east of the glass wall is a beveled cedar wall between the living area and the glass wall of the study

The wall where the study and bedrooms are located consists of large floor-to ceiling panes of double glazed openings flanked by vertical louvers. The 39’ wall where the children’s bedrooms and bathroom are located is notched back a few feet behind the wall of the study. This transitional panel is sheathed in horizontal cedar siding.

At the end of the wall where the two bedrooms are located is the master bedroom suite. The bedroom area walls form an obtuse angle. At the east end of the wall of glass facing southeast is a doorway outside. The 10’ floor-to-ceiling glass walls facing southwest and west have an wide overhang terminating in a pointed acute angle. The 25’ northwest wall of the master bedroom is variegated limestone like all the other stone walls of the house. This wall contains one large window opening that opens into the bathroom. It has a vertical louver on its east side. There is a shallow overhang on this wall.

Interior

The interior of the house contains 10 rooms, some of which are multiuse spaces, reflecting the open plan that was becoming increasingly popular after World War II. There is no basement; the house is built on a concrete slab.

The front doorway, located in the central section of the house, opens into a reception area that has an irregular shape accessing the dining/living area to the south, the family bedroom area to the northwest and the service hallway to the northeast. With a low ceiling, the reception area opens into a taller-ceilinged dining/living area. This space, with a raised off-center clerestory window, forms the core of the house. To the west is the bedroom wing, with the north hallway that angles northwest accessing two bedrooms and, at the end of the hall, the master suite. This suite is located in a short wing that angles southwest and culminates in a bay. The master suite consists of a bedroom, dressing room and bathroom. Built-ins line the northeast wall. To the east of the living/dining area is the service wing containing the kitchen, laundry room and maid's room. The north hallway accessing these rooms terminates in the hobby room that projects in a bay to the east. Adjacent to the hobby room is a storage area and a two car garage. The garage and storage spaces take the shape of a parallelogram, with garage doors entered through doors perpendicular to the side walls.

Like well-designed modern houses of the period, the design for the Fagens' home was totally driven by function. Many of the rooms have irregular shapes, but there was plentiful space for furniture placement, artwork and for built in storage. The design of the exterior reflects its interior use, and the interior spaces are divided into five zones.

The first zone is the family living zone, which includes the small irregularly-shaped reception area, the more spacious dining/living area with a raised clerestory window at the west end over the living area in front of the fireplace, and the study. The clerestory provides additional daylight to this area of the room. The living area and study surround a stone fireplace core, which is set in front of an enclosed boiler room that is accessed from the reception area. There are bookshelves at the west end of the living room fireplace. The living room and study fireplaces are cut into the stone wall enclosing the boiler room. The living room has a plaster ceiling and plaster walls beneath the clerestory windows. The floor is a wood parquet, though the original flooring in the reception and dining/living areas was cork.[7] There is a door at the east end of the dining area opening onto the yard. The study is small, three steps down from the living area. The stairs are on the diagonal, adjacent to the fireplace. An accordion door separates the living room from the study. Built-ins, including a sink and cabinets, line the north and west walls of the study.

[7] Interview David Lawrence, August 2, 2020.

The second zone contains the hallway and family bedrooms. The northeast wall of the hall has built in bookcases set under clerestory windows. The study is located two steps down from the short leg of the hallway off the reception that has an entrance to a bathroom at the east end. Just west of this leg is an entrance to the leg that is down two steps and contains doorways to two family bedrooms. The east children's bedroom is rectangular; the west children's bedroom has a diagonal wall at its west end. There is a jack and jill bathroom between the two bedrooms.

The third zone contains the master bedroom suite. It is access by a doorway at the end of the bedroom hallway that opens into the dressing room that has buil-ins along the north wall. At the west end of the dressing room is the polygonal master bath. Three of the four walls of the master bedroom have walls of glass, those facing southeast, southwest and west. There is a doorway outside at the east end of the southeast glass wall.

The fourth zone is the service zone containing the kitchen, laundry, and maid's room. These rooms are accessed off the narrow service hall that extends northeast from the reception area. The kitchen has wood built-in cabinetry. The laundry room also has built in wood cabinets. At the east end of the hallway is an exterior doorway. The hallway terminates in the polygonal hobby room. There are entrances to the adjacent storage room from both the hallway and the hobby room.

The fifth zone, which takes the shape of a parallelogram contains the storage room and a two-car garage. Each of the two spaces are smaller parallelograms.

The five living zones are expressed in their exterior shapes. The road-facing north walls are stone. The north, east and southeast-facing walls are sheathed in beveled wood siding. The walls facing south southeast and southwest are largely glass. Window placement was driven by the Keck's commitment to taking advantage of solar energy. The family and the service hallways along the north side of the house are lit by clerestory windows. This enabled cabinetry to line the north wall of the bedroom wing and the dressing area of the master suite. Floor-to-ceiling windows facing south and southwest light the dining area, living area, study and bedrooms. Those windows lighting the south wall of the kitchen-laundry-maid's and hobby room are approximately 5' from the ground. The east wall of the garage is lit by windows of the same height.

In addition to functionality, heat and ventilation drove the design of the house. Windows could admit total light, with ventilation provided by screens covered by louvers on the outside and by wood panels that open and close on the inside. Broad overhangs line the southeast, south and southwest walls of the house. This enabled the sun to flood the interior and warm it when the azemuth of the sun is low in the winter and prevented the sun's rays from entering the house in the summer when the sun is higher in the sky. The flat roof was originally designed to hold a thin film of water that would evaporate and cool the interior of the house.

INTEGRITY

The architectural integrity of the house is excellent. Its condition is deteriorated, with some water damage, however, due to lack of maintenance and several years of vacancy. On the exterior, there have been no changes over time. The only issues relate to condition. Sections of the overhang are missing wood and are rotted. On the interior there is some missing hardware and broken wood parquet flooring (that had replaced the original floors, which were cork) and some replaced bathroom fixtures, though the structured glass in bathrooms and many Crane bathroom fixtures are largely intact. Lights outside at the garage and entrance and inside at the reception, dining area and bedroom hall are original. The exterior and interior features that made the house significant remain and are being rehabilitated and restored for future stewards of this high style modern house.

THE POOL HOUSE

There is a pool house and adjacent pool in the southeast corner of the property. Its northeast and east walls meet at an obtuse angle, facing the house. The walls have beveled wood siding and the roof is flat. There are three main spaces on the interior. At the north end is a mechanical room with pool equipment, a middle room with a changing and sitting area and at the south another changing area. There is access to a toilet/sink shower room off each of the changing rooms. Although some of the mechanicals are intact, counters have been removed. Walls and ceilings are sided in pine. Ventilation is through pine louvers, but there is no glass. The pool, which is rectangular with a diagonal side to the northeast is currently covered.

Fagen, Mildred and Abel, House — Lake, Illinois

Name of Property — County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [ ] A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [X] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- [ ] A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- [ ] B removed from its original location.
- [ ] C a birthplace or grave.
- [ ] D a cemetery.
- [ ] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- [ ] F a commemorative property.
- [ ] G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Fagen, Mildred and Abel, House | Lake, Illinois

Name of Property | County and State

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1948

Significant Dates

1948

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)

N/A

Architect/Builder

Keck & Keck

Keck, George Fred

Fagen, Mildred and Abel, House | Lake, Illinois

Name of Property | County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations).

SUMMARY

The Mildred and Abel Fagen is locally significant for its architectural value and meets Criterion C for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. It is an excellent example of the Modern Movement in residential architecture, one that was built of natural materials--limestone, cedar and glass, with careful attention to detail while eschewing historic references. Modern residential architecture in the Chicago area, and specifically in Lake Forest, is generally characterized by simplicity, flat roofs, the use of natural materials and vast expanses of glass. Unlike traditional houses, they rarely have applied ornamentation; rather the texture of the materials used inside and out was used to create visual interest. The strong influence of Frank Lloyd Wright is apparent in the Fagen House. Designed in 1947 and built in 1948 by the prominent architectural firm of Keck & Keck, the Mildred and Abel Fagen House is one of a relatively small number of modern houses in Lake Forest, a Chicago suburb characterized by traditional houses designed by prominent architects.

The firm of Keck & Keck is as noteworthy as distinguished Lake Forest practitioners Howard Van Doren Shaw and David Adler, but the Keck office practiced in a different, modern, design idiom. George Fred and William Keck's firm is distinguished for its design ingenuity but particularly for its application of passive solar design principles, which were important in the design of the Fagen House. The house has superb integrity. It was prized by its early owners, the Fagens and Irene and Franklin McMahon, who made no changes. Currently being rehabilitated and restored, the house continues to express the Keck firm's vision for Mildred and Abel Fagen.

Fagen, Mildred and Abel, House — Lake, Illinois

Name of Property — County and State

Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

HISTORY OF THE PROPERTY

The history of the 92-acre property purchased by Mildred and Abel Fagen dates back to 1925, when approximately 500 acres of farmland were purchased by advertising magnate Albert D. Lasker to build a large estate. When the property was built out in 1931, it consisted of a 55 room French Norman style chateau, 27 dependencies on the estate ground, 97 acres of gardens, a golf course and a working farm where dairy cattle and flocks of poultry were raised. Society architect David Adler designed the buildings. The acreage purchased by the Fagens, on the south side of Old Mill Road was part of the farmland. After Lasker's wife Flora died in 1935, he lost interest in this vast estate and, in 1940, donated the property to the University of Chicago, where he served on the Board of Trustees. Unable to maintain it, the university sold off the property.[8] The Fagens purchased their tract for $30,000 in 1943 from the University of Chicago.[9] It was at this location where they constructed their house, pool house and pool, at 1581 Old Mill Road.

The Fagens wanted a modern house and selected George Fred Keck of the firm of Keck & Keck as their architect. Mrs. Fagen drove the selection of the architect. Initially she was interested in engaging Frank Lloyd Wright. Equipped with her own drawings Mildred and Abel drove up to Taliesin to meet with Wright. Wright gave them a tour and she asked if he could draw a house for their land. He expressed interest, stating that his fee would be $300,000. That amount of money was not in the Fagens' budget and Mrs. Fagen turned to Keck & Keck, a firm that she felt confident could provide them with the modern house that they wanted.[10]

Modern Architecture

A focus on designing modern residences in the Chicago began in the early 1930s and extended into the 1970s when modernism gave way to a resurgence of interest in historical architecture.[11] At that time Post Modernism began to displace Modernism.

Modern houses were based on geometry not historic precedent. They had no applied ornamentation; rather the texture of the materials used inside and out was employed to create visual interest. After the Museum of Modern Art's 1932 *Modern Architecture: International Style Exhibition*, curated by Philip Johnson and Henry Russell Hitchcock, modern houses with vast expanses of glass became an important characteristic of the

[8] "Mill Road Farm, Albert D. Lasker Estate." Stuart Cohen and Susan Benjamin. *North Shore Chicago: Houses of the Lakefront Suburbs, 1890-1940*. New York: Acanthus Press, 2004. 244-249

[9] Al Chase, "Lasker Home, Part of Farm, Sold by U of C." *Chicago Tribune*, October 7, 1943:2.

[10] David Lawrence, the Fagens' son related the story to Susan Benjamin in their phone interview of August 7, 2020

[11] Howard Fisher, who designed a house for his brother Walter T. Fisher and his wife Katherine Dummer in Winnetka in 1929 and Henry Dubin, who designed his family's own home in Highland Park in 1930, were among the earliest modernist architects of Modern houses in the Chicago region. Both designed houses that were influenced by European modernism.

Midwest's brand of modernism that had been introduced to Chicago at the 1933 Century of Progress. International Style houses had glass walls opening onto rear terraces or patios where families spent their casual recreational time. After World War II, families from all economic levels tended to abandon formal living habits that took place in homes that previously had formal living and dining rooms.

The 1932, the Museum of Modern Art's first architecture exhibition was organized, with the intent of finding stylistic commonality among buildings in fifteen countries. Relatively few people visited the exhibition, which only was up for two months, but the show traveled and, along with selected models and pictures of modern Chicago and Century of Progress architects, it was on display at the Sears Gallery, on the 6th floor of the State-Loop store.[12] In addition, the MOMA catalogue, named *The International Style* had wide circulation. In it, the principles of modernism were defined and included:

1) Architecture as volume not mass. Plans were worked out with far greater freedom than in the past. Windows were no longer holes in the walls but were large and had far greater importance. Flat roofs were typical.
2) Regularity instead of symmetry. Buildings were constructed with a characteristic order, sometimes with non-rectangular shapes
3) Avoidance of applied ornamentation. The texture of materials replaced decoration. Proportions were particularly important. Simplicity governed design.

Buildings that embodied these characteristics to a greater or lesser degree came to be known as "International Style". The International Style principles embodied in the Fagen House incorporated a floorplan that grew out of the family's needs. George Fred Keck created volumes for the family to live in. The public spaces had an open plan, with a living and dining area occupying the same space. The raised clerestory over the living area space lit the seating area. The master suite also has an open plan, with the sleeping area and dressing area separated only by built-ins. The hallway leading to the master bedroom accesses the children's two bedrooms. Another hallway, adjacent to the kitchen, accesses the service rooms, with the hobby room at the end other service hall. To ensure privacy from the street, there are only long narrow clerestory windows that light these interior hallways that are adjacent to the front of the house. By contrast, the living areas all face the rear, with wide expanses of glass. Function determined the plan—very unlike the perpetually popular Colonial Revival houses, whose plans were determined by the style itself. Large glass windows create a flow of space between interior and exterior and create beautiful views. There is nothing symmetrical in the house. Rooms are laid out in an orderly fashion, with many rooms irregular in shape—adding to spatial contrast without compromising functionality. Finally, there is no applied decoration. The texture of the materials and the simplicity of their design organization provide visual interest. One example is seen in the color differentiation of the stone and the way it is laid. Another is seen in the horizontal wood siding with beveled edges. Even the copper flashing

[12] Susan Benjamin and Michelangelo Sabatino. *Modern in the Middle: Chicago Houses, 1929-1975*. New York, The Monacelli Press, 2020, 15-16.

between materials has a rich striated texture. The simple, subtle treatment of materials is a hallmark of Modernism. It is expressed with considerable design ingenuity by George Fred Keck in his design for the Fagens' house.

George Fred Keck designed a house for the Fagens with no historic references, one that is simple in design, subtle in detailing and everywhere functional. It is Modern, reflecting a culture when people were beginning to live more informally, and household care was reduced to a fraction of that needed a half century earlier. The house is built on a slab and the roof is flat. There is no basement or attic, but there are beautiful wood built-ins to accommodate necessary storage. Detailing, including hardware on the cabinetry, is as carefully thought out as the special organization of the house and the design organization of the materials used.

Keck & Keck continuously built houses that accommodated numerous International Style concepts, but earlier houses like the Bertram J. Cahn House, (built in Lake Forest in 1937 and now extensively remodeled), were, by definition, International Style, sheathed in white stucco, had planar surfaces and closely resembled the buildings illustrated in the *International Style* catalogue. The Cahn House and the Herbert Bruning House in Wilmette, Illinois, were heavily influenced by the European International Style houses featured in the MoMA exhibition. As the architecture of Keck & Keck evolved, the firm utilized more natural materials; their houses tended to be constructed of wood, brick (or stone) and glass, favoring natural colors. The firm's later houses, like the Fagen House, were closer in spirit to Wright's residential work of the period.

The Mildred and Abel Fagen House is a meticulously-designed example of modern residential architecture, embracing the concepts of simplicity and rejecting architecture of the eclectic past. It was also one conceived in the idiom of Frank Lloyd Wright--built of natural materials--limestone, cedar and glass, with careful attention to detail. Originally located on 92 acres, surrounded by meadows and woods, it retains sufficient acreage to feel isolated from the houses built up around it. The house has deep overhangs that, in addition to embodying Keck's passive solar principles, echo the broad expanses of the surrounding flat landscape. The horizontality of that landscape is repeated throughout the exterior, in the way the exterior limestone slabs are laid and the beveled cedar siding is applied.

Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959), who had created the iconic prairie house, but had a knack for reinventing himself, developed houses between 1936, when he designed the First Jacobs House in Madison, Wisconsin, and his death in 1959, that he called Usonians. These Usonian houses originated in the 1930s to solve the problem of low cost housing and were characterized by horizontal orientation, a close relationship with the out of doors, numerous built ins, radiant heating in the floor, natural materials and the open plan that families building houses after World War II generally preferred. Although Wright's Usonian houses were typically small and built to be affordable, Wright also designed larger homes utilizing the same principles. One such house was the Charles F. Glore House at 170 North Mayflower Road in Lake Forest. It bears similar characteristics to Wright's Usonians but stands two stories with ample proportions designed for entertaining.

The Fagan House has numerous similarities to Wright's modestly-scaled one-story Usonian houses. It is emphatically horizontal, including a flat roof, bands of clerestory windows and long narrow limestone slabs separated by a string course that is composed of copper flashing. The house has broad overhangs mimicking the flat surrounding landscape. On the interior, entrance is into a reception area with a low ceiling. This space opens into the living-dining area with a higher ceiling that has a section further raised by a band of clerestory windows lighting the fireplace seating area. This transition from a compressed space to one that is taller and more open is a characteristic feature of Wright houses. There are two stone fireplaces (adjacent to the mechanical room) forming the core of the house, where the living area transitions to a study and the bedroom area. The fireplace typically is located in the center of a Wright-designed house. The rooms radiate out from a core diagonally in the Fagan House. As in many Wright and Wrightian houses, the Fagen House bedrooms open off a narrow corridor along the front of the house. Wright did something similar, sometimes referring to this corridor in his plans as a gallery. The Fagen House is subtly organized on two levels, with steps down to the study and to the bedroom area from the hallway linking the reception area and the bedroom wing. Multiple levels are common in Wright's Usonian houses.

The Keck firm often employed Wrightian features, like an emphasis on horizontality, but there is one particular feature of the Fagan House specifically associated a particular house by Wright and less often seen in a Keck-designed house. The Keck's design for the Fagen House bears close resemblance to Wright's "hexangonal" Usonian houses which embraced the diagonal, like his house for Paul Hanna House, built in Palo Alto, California, in 1936. Although brick and not stone, the Hanna House features irregularly-shaped rooms based on the diagonal and floor-to-ceiling windows.

Unlike almost all of the houses designed by the Keck firm, the floorplan of the Fagen House is composed of irregular polygonal shapes and diagonal roofs terminating in pointed eaves extending over walls composed of stone, wood and floor-to ceiling panes of glass. During the Keck's long career--the office was in business from 1926 until the death of William Keck in 1980--the firm only designed a handful of houses that are characterized by the use of natural materials with this type of irregularly-shaped plan based on the diagonal. The first was the Dr. Jack R. Buchbinder House in Fish Creek, Wisconsin, in 1939.[13] Robert Boyce, Keck's biographer, writing in his book *Keck and Keck* noted that the 1948 Fagen House was "the last Keck house to exhibit a strong Wrightian influence". Wright's influence on Keck was not lost on Mildred Fagen when Keck & Keck designed their house.

The Fagen House was recognized early for its significance. It was published in the March, 1951, issue of the *Architectural Record* with Hedrich Blessing photographs commissioned by Keck & Keck.[14]The article, titled "A

[13]Robert Boyce. Keck & Keck. New York, Princeton Press, 1993. 101..

[14]"http://www.chsmedia.org:8081/ipac20/ipac.jsp?session=15962176N5BR1.21459&menu=search&aspect=subtab112&npp=10&ipp=20&spp=20&profile=public&ri=&index=.GW&term=hedrich+fagen&x=7&y=3&aspect=subtab112. "Abel Fagen residence in Lake Forest, IL. 1581 Old Mill Road. Hedrich Blessing, photographer. January 4, 1951. The collection includes 20 negatives and 35 photographic prints

House with Emotional Content: Residence for Mr. and Mrs. Abel E. Fagen, Lake Forest, ILL". George Fred Keck—William Keck, Architects; Marianne Willish, Interiors", describes the "package of emotional content" as described by Fred Keck. The author speaks "of the family's interests that the house was to express, of development of the solar ideas, of special feeling to avoid the monotony of rectangular units, of colors and tones and sculptural forms 'to enhance the feeling of relaxation.'" He notes that the family had three sons, two about ready for college (so the family needed only two bedrooms besides the master suite). Keck commented for the article that "Mrs. Fagan is especially interested in sculpture and painting, and for the children, music. Entertaining was also mentioned…." Keck added, "We made a point of the angular placement of windows, not only for the view, but also for the feeling of space and for the reflective values of the glass, which add a note to the spatial feeling in the house, and rid it of monotony of the rectangular unit." The writer for the *Record* added, "The architects also planned a sculptural quality in the spacing of forms and materials."[15] In addition to the *Architectural Record* article, the house was featured in Katherine Morrow Ford and Thomas H. Creighton's *The American House Today* in 1951.[16] The authors of this book, which describes modern houses from all over the country (New Canaan, Connecticut; San Antonio, Texas; Orlando, Florida; Los Angeles, California; Portland, Oregon, for example) state in their introduction that "all good architecture is modern architecture, in its own time….Good architecture sits well on its site, that is modern. Good architecture functions well fort he people who use it, that is modern. Good architecture makes the best possible use of materials and construction methods that are available, that is modern."[17]

The Architect

Over the years, the work of the firm of Keck & Keck has been widely published in architectural journals and recognized nationally for its innovation in the development of passive solar energy. George Fred Keck's innovative work began to receive acclaim in the early 1930s, when Fred (as he was generally known) designed the House of Tomorrow for the 1933 Century of Progress Exposition and the Crystal House for the fair in 1934. Over 22 million people attended the Century of Progress its first year, and over 16 Million the second. Keck, with his brother and later partner William Keck applied the principals of passive solar energy that Fred began developing in the 1930s in their design for the Fagens' new home.

[15] "A House with Emotional Content" Fagen House. George Fred-William Keck. Architects, Marianne Willish, Interiors *Architectural Record*, 109. March, 1951.

[16] Ford and Creighton, 87

[17] Ibid. 32.

George Fred Keck was born in Watertown, Wisconsin, on May 17, 1895. His interest in art and fine craftsmanship was cultivated when he was very young, having grown up painting in watercolor and working in the shop of his father's furniture store. He started college at the University of Wisconsin, where he studied civil engineering. After a year he transferred to the University of Illinois, where he entered the architectural engineering curriculum. When Fred's brother William Keck graduated in Architecture from the University of Illinois, he joined his brother's office. He became Fred's partner in 1946, shortly before the Abel and Mildred Fagen House was designed.

In 1926, after working in the office of architects Hugh Garden and Richard Schmidt, Fred Keck opened his own practice. Keck's early work, which was residential, was influenced by traditional styles and he designed Colonial and Tudor Revival houses; in the 1920s, the more progressive Prairie architecture that Frank Lloyd Wright had established at the turn of the century had petered out and traditional styles were gaining in popularity. But, in 1929, Keck 's artistic ingenuity began to take hold. He designed the Miralago Ballroom in Wilmette (destroyed by fire in 1932), an early example of the International Style, with Art Deco features.

Keck established his reputation as a modernist in 1933, with his design for the House of Tomorrow. It was an octagon shape, inspired by an 1854 octagonal house in Watertown, Wisconsin, but adapted to expressing Keck's progressive design ideas. The ground floor housed a garage (for Buckminster Fuller's Dymaxion car) and an airplane hanger. Built around a central core to house mechanical systems, the exterior walls on the upper two stories were totally enclosed in glass. The house was built of prefabricated parts. Rooms were wedge shaped, so furniture had to be arranged to accommodate spaces that were not rectangular; this was to be true in the Fagen House, which had many rooms that were not orthogonal. Noted interior decorator Marianne Willisch designed the interior in collaboration with Mildred Fagen. In addition to collaborating on furniture selection, Ms. Willisch suggested that there needed to be a partition that was translucent but not transparent when viewing the dining area (that was 15’ away) from the reception space, and the famed avant-garde sculptor Alexander Archipenko was engaged to design the screen

Keck’s idea of incorporating passive solar energy in his residential designs had its origin during construction of the House of Tomorrow. Despite chilly February temperatures outside, the interior of the house was comfortable; workmen were warm enough, just in shirtsleeves. Narcisco G. Menocal, Department of Art History at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, observed., "It was then that the idea of heating a house by means of a 'greenhouse effect' occurred to him." In 1936, Fred Keck applied the theories on passive solar energy in his Bertram. J. Cahn House, (considerably altered) located in Lake Forest at the northeast corner of Green Bay Road and Westleigh Roads. The living and bedroom areas of the house were oriented to the south, with eaves designed to keep direct sunlight away from rooms in summer yet allowing the low winter sun to penetrate the interior. Hallways followed the curve of the driveway.[18] Beginning in 1940, the firm began

[18] “Irma Kuppenhsimer and Bertram J. Cahn House” Susan S. Benjamin and Michelangelo Sabatino. *Modern in the Middle: Chicago Houses 1929-1975.* New York: The Monacelli Press, 2020. 84. This essay explains in detail how George Fred Keck applied passive solar principles in his design for the Cahn House.

utilizing Thermopane (double-glazed) windows on all their projects. They also began using flat, pan-like roofs capable of holding water and functioning as cooling ponds in the summer to prevent excessive heat gain through reflection and evaporation.

In the Fagen House, Keck and his brother applied the theories he had developed during the previous decade. The house has a mechanical core, with the living area/study fireplaces adjacent to it located in the center of the house. Rooms extend from this core, with the living/dining area in the center, flanked by two diagonal (bedroom and service) wings.[19] Radiant heat was imbedded in the floors. Keck reported that heat loss to the ground is negligible and that floors are cool in summer because they are in contact with the cool ground.[20] The house is oriented to take advantage of the path of the sun, with large panels of Thermopane glass facing southeast, south and southwest, lighting the kitchen, laundry, maid's and hobby room on the east, the dining/living area and study in the center, (with the living room projecting out to garner sunshine on three sides on the south); and the bedrooms on the southwest. The master bedroom, like the dining/living room, has three glass walls. Because ventilation was handled through louvered openings, full expanses of glass provided plentiful light and stunning views of the surrounding landscape. There are broad overhangs across the entire southeast, south and southwest sides of the house so that sun penetrates the interior in the winter when the sun is low and not the summer, when the sun is higher in the sky. The roof of the Fagen House was designed to carry a thin pond of water for cooling; there is no air conditioning in the house, only a large fan on the roof to suck warm air from the home's interior.

The Owners

The owners of the house, Mildred and Abel Fagen, were significant contributors to the cultural life of the city of Chicago and the North Shore suburbs. Mildred's love of the arts, specifically modern art, led them to commission portraits by Salvadore Dali. In Lake Forest Mildred served as a member of the Lake Forest College Citizen's Advisory Committee on Creative Art, and was a founder of the Deer Path Art League as well as of its art fair on the square, which she directed for many years. In addition, she was an original member of the Lake Forest College Citizens' Advisory Committee on the Creative Arts, which was established in 1962 to "work with the college's faculty and administration to strengthen the school's creative arts program.[21] Beyond Lake Forest, Mildred Fagen served as a trustee of the Ravinia Festival Association, where she founded the Ravinia Art Show that was held in conjunction with the Festival's summer music season, reasoning the title, Ravinia Art Festival, was misleading unless the festival offered exposure to all the arts, particularly the visual, which

[19] The form was likened to the wings of an airplane by the Fagens' son, David Lawrence.

[20] Ford and Creighton. 87

[21] "LFC Advisory Group: Arts Committee Organized" 1962, publication unknown, located in "Creative Arts Advisory Committee, 1958-1972" folder, Archives and Special Collections, Library, Lake Forest College.

was beginning to involve tremendous numbers of people.[22] For 12 years (1956-1968) she served as the show's director. In Chicago, Mildred Fagen was an active trustee of Roosevelt University, which had been founded in 1945. During her nearly 10 years as trustee, two of her major undertakings were instituting an art program in 1960 and in 1964 founding the Council of 100, an organization of collectors, art educators and other friends of the university, to help support it. Abel Fagen also served as a trustee of the University. Mildred Fagen's interest in Modern architecture extended beyond the design for their home. She served on the Board's building committee of North Shore Congregation Israel, which selected Minoru Yamasaki as architect for its new building. Once the temple opened in 1964, Mrs. Fagen became involved in the acquisition and installation of the paintings, sculpture, and specially commissioned art. While serving on the Temple Board, it was on her recommendation that a corps of volunteers be trained to conduct tours of the building.[23] In recognition of "her distinguished service as a patron of the arts and who has made a significant contribution to 'better designs in architecture and allied crafts for churches, synagogues, and other religious buildings' " she was named an honorary member of the Church Architectural Guild of America in 1965, during the organization's national conference. [24] While living in the house, Mrs. Fagen studied art at the North Shore Art League and became a sculptor. At the end of the service hallway of their home was a "hobby room", where she could engage in her art.

Mildred Fagen had grown up in Chicago's south shore neighborhood, Abel Fagen, in Evanston. They married in 1930 when he was a broker in the textile industry. He later founded Medtex Fabrics, a textile company headquartered in New York City.[25] By 1940 they had moved to a colonial revival house in the North Shore suburb of Glencoe with their two sons.[26] They lived there until the late 1940s when the Fagen family moved to their modern house in Lake Forest, where they remained until selling the house in 1981 to the Franklin McMahons.

Franklin and Irene McMahon were the second owners of the Fagen house, purchasing it after the house had been incorporated into the Wedgewood subdivision. By that time, the 59-year-old Franklin was a world-renowned artist whose work was described in his obituary in *The New York Times* "[as] drawing historic scenes in elegant, emphatic lines." [27] McMahon was a long time free-lance artist whose subjects included the civil rights struggle (such as the dramatic 1955 trial for the murder of Chicago teenager Emmitt Till), American

[22] Ann Feuer, "Mildred Fagen Speaks of Art and Ravinia" Clipping, Publication unknown, March 21, 1968, p. 38, located in "Creative Arts Advisory Committee, 1958-1972" folder, Archives and Special Collections, Library, Lake Forest College.
[23] North Shore Congregation Israel Board of Trustee Minutes, September 9, 1963.
[24] "Rites Set for Founder of Art Show." *Chicago Tribune*, April 17, 1971, 12.
[25] "Mrs. Abel E. Fagen," Obituaries, *Chicago Tribune*, April 18, 1971: A16.
[26] 1940 United States census. Accessed through ancestry.com. The Fagens lived at 481 Woodlawn in Glencoe, a house that is still standing. In 1940, they had two sons. Edward was born in 1931, Richard in 1933. They lived with one servant. They had a third son, David, born in 1943. "Mrs. Abel E. Fagen," Obituaries, *Chicago Tribune*, April 18, 1971: A16.
[27] Douglas Martin, "Franklin McMahon, Who Drew the News, Dies at 90." *The New York Times*, March 7, 2012 https://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/08/us/franklin-mcmahon-who-drew-the-news-dies-at-90.html

political campaigns (he covered nearly everyone from 1960 to 2004),[28] spacecraft launching (he sketched in Mission Control during the first moon landing), and the Catholic Church (covering Pope Paul VI in Jerusalem, for example). The drawings were included in major publications of the era such as *Life, Fortune, Look*, *Sports Illustrated*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, *World Book*, *The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post*, as well as the *Chicago Tribune.* Films about his work were made for PBS and for CBS, Chicago, "resulting in three Emmys and a Peabody Award."[29]

Unfortunately, the owners of the house treasured by both the Fagens and the McMahons did not fare well after the McMahons moved out in 2007 It was then allowed to deteriorate and was vacant when purchased by its current owner, Chris Enck, who is rehabilitating and restoring it.

Modernism in Lake Forest

Like Forest is a North Shore suburb characterized by high style traditional houses designed by prominent architects. There are relatively few houses that can be characterized as Modern in this architecturally conservative North Shore suburb. That said, there are distinguished modern Lake Forest houses designed by significant architects, including Edward Dart, Roy Binkley, Winston Elting, Edward Humrich, Frazier and Raftery and even one by John Black Lee, who gained prominence in New Canaan, Connecticut. There are none, however, with a focus on passive solar principles bearing a similarity to Frank Lloyd Wright's diagonal Usonian houses. Frank Lloyd Wright did design the Glore House in Lake Forest based on Usonian principles, but grander in scale than the Fagen House. Although the Irma Kuppenheimer and Bertram J. Cahn House by George Fred Keck was an early embodiment of Keck's ideas on passive solar energy, it was pure International Style, not at all influenced by Frank Lloyd Wright, and has been extensively remodeled with the addition of a second floor. Any semblance of Keck's work has been obliterated.

A Lake Forest house stylistically close to the Mildred and Abel Fagen House was designed in 1957 by Edward Dart, F.A.I.A., (1922-1975) known for his ecclesiastical architecture as well as residential designs. It is the David B. Peck House at 334 Circle Lane.The house is long and low, standing a single story. It is built of common brick, wood and glass and, composed of a series of horizontal planes with flat roofs and broad overhangs. The Wrightian influence is clear, but no attention was paid to the design of the house in relation to the azimuth of the sun. The house faces south but the large windows overlook the ravine on the north. It is not a passive solar design like the Fagen House.

[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.

In 1961, LeRoy Binkley (1922-1994) designed the Glenn Jackson House at 1130 Walden Lane in Lake Forest. It is a single-story house, but designed with a totally different palette of materials than the Fagen House, one that incorporates large boulders into its design. With floor-to-ceiling glass windows opening onto a ravine, it has a low-pitched gable roof. Interior walls are of stone and wood. The siting is different; the stone is of a different type (likely granite) and larger size; the angle of the sun was not taken into consideration and it has an expressed steel structural system. Binkley was graduate of Illinois Institute of Technology when Mies van der Rohe directed the School's architecture program there and the influence of MIes' structuralist aesthetic is evident in Binkley's design for this house. Despite having worked for Paul Schweikher, there is no evidence of Wright's influence as there is in Schweikher's house and studio in Schaumburg.

The Winston Elting(1907-1968) House, located at 999 Walden Lane, is, like the Fagen House in that it rests on a wooded lot that was originally part of a large estate property. The land, which was first subdivided in the 1930s originally belonged to Cyrus McCormick, Jr. Elting built his home there in 1940. Although he had attended Princeton and the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, Win Elting was a decided modernist who favored natural materials. The Elting house has a flat roof but unlike the Fagen House has some sections that stand two stories and some that are one story. Setbacks on the second floor allow for decks over single-story portions. The house is clad in redwood and brick not Cedar and stone. There are corner windows and several punched openings that frame views but no walls of glass. A glass brick wall is deployed for privacy at the front of the house. The windows at the rear look out on a deep ravine.

Before Franklin McMahon lived in the Fagen House he built a wood and glass home designed in 1950 by Edward Humrich (1902-1091) at 806 Green Bay Road in Lake Forest. Unlike the Fagen House, the McMahon House was designed for a city lot not a vast expanse of property. It faces the street and was modest in size. Like the Fagen House it was built with passive solar siting, radiant heat in the floors and horizontal sicing. Although he apprenticed as a draftsman for Russell Walcott and Robert Seyfarth, distinguished classically trained architects, Humrich was a modernist whose work was strongly influenced by Frank Lloyd Wright. His houses are reminiscent of the Usonian Houses that Wright designed between 1936 and his death in 1959. The integrity of this house, however, has been severely compromised. It was totally rebuilt and expanded ca. 2012

In the late 1940s, John Black Lee (1924-2016) designed 367 Bluff's Edge Drive in Lake Forest for his mother Lydia Beckwith Lee. He grew up in Chicago, attended Brown University, apprenticed with Walter Gropius and worked in the office of Schweikher & Elting (who became Paul Schweikher's partner) before he moved to New Canaan, where he was known as one of the Harvard Five. Lee designed a symmetrical, formal but modern house for his mother, Lydia Beckwith Lee. It is International Style, white painted brick, one story, with a flat roof. Like the Elting House, it was built on "Walden", the Cyrus McCormick, Jr. estate. The house is sited high on a bluff facing Lake Michigan.

In 1955, Walter Frazier (1895-1976) & Howard Raftery (1896-1963) designed a one-story house with a flat roof for the Elliott Donnelleys at 1050 West Melody Road. It was built using an International Style vocabulary, with flat brick and wood walls painted white. Unlike the Fagen House, it reflects a formal, classical approach characteristic of the traditional country houses such as those designed by architect David Adler. The house is entered around a rectangular courtyard, recalling the plan of a Roman villa. It is located on a corner of the 1910 entrance to J. Ogden Armour's gentleman's farm estate off Waukegan Road.[30] Although both the Fagan house and the Donnelley House are subdivisions of a larger parcel of estate property, with the Donnelley House originally built on 30 acres of prairie landscape, the Fagan House was designed to be a relaxing family home, not expressing formality. They reflect a substantially different approach to designing a home.

The Mildred and Abel House is architecturally significant, meeting criterion C for listing on the National Register. Designed by George Fred Keck, the house was photographed by the distinguished Chicago architectural photographers Hedrich Blessing and published almost immediately after it was completed in the *Architectural Record*. The work of Keck and Keck became widely published and the Kecks' firm developed a national reputation. Their modern design for the Fagens is equal in quality to their more conservative traditional counterparts in Lake Forest that were high style houses created by talented designers. The Fagen House is unlike any other in Lake Forest—a passive solar design with diagonal spaces inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian houses, but tailored to meet the life of Mildred and Abel Fagen, one devoted to culture and the arts. The significance of this house is enhanced by its superb integrity.

[30] Rommy Lopat, Aruthur H. Miller, Sarah Wimmer. Photos by Roger Mohr "Postwar Modernism in Lake Forest". Walter Frazier. *Lake Forest Preservation Foundation Newsletter*. Lake Forest, Illinois. Vol 2, Number 3. Fall, 2009.

Fagen, Mildred and Abel, House	Lake, Illinois
Name of Property	County and State

Fagen, Mildred and Abel, House — Lake, Illinois

Name of Property — County and State

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"They were there," *Chicago Tribune*, July 7, 1956, 17.

"Wright Chat. Keck and Keck"http://wrightchat.savewright.org/viewtopic.php?t=5124

Fagen, Mildred and Abel, House — Name of Property

Lake, Illinois — County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
____previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
____designated a National Historic Landmark
____recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

____State Historic Preservation Office
____Other State agency
____Federal agency
____Local government
____University
____Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

Fagen, Mildred and Abel, House — Name of Property

Lake, Illinois — County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.7

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84:

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	Latitude		Longitude	3	Latitude		Longitude
2	Latitude		Longitude	4	Latitude		Longitude

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Parcel 1: Lot 11 in Block 3 in Wedgewood Subdivision of Parts of Section 13, Tpownship 43, Range 11, East of the 3rd Principal Meridian, and of Section 18, Township 43 North, Range 12, East of the Third Principal Meridian, According to the Plat Thereof Recorded November 20, 1979 as Document 2034877 in Book 72 of Plats, Pages 54,55 and 56 in Lake County, Illinois
Parcel 2: An Undivided 1/63rd Interest in Outlots 1,2,and 3 in Aforesaid Wedgewood Subdivision, being a subdivision of Part of Sections 12 and 13, Township 43 North, Range 11, East of the 3rd Principal Meridian, and of Section 18, Township 43 North, Range 12, East of the 3rd Principal Meridian, according to the Plat Thereof Recorded November 20, 1979 as Document 2034877 in Book 72 of Plats, Pages, 54,55 and 56, in Lake County Illinois.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The Legal Description of the property of

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan S. Benjamin, Manager date August 8, 2020

organization Benjamin Historic Certifications, LLC telephone 312-203-1808

Fagen, Mildred and Abel, House — Lake, Illinois

Name of Property — County and State

street & number 711 Marion Avenue email ssbenjamin@sbcglobal.net

city or town Highland Park state IL zip code 60035

Additional Documentation

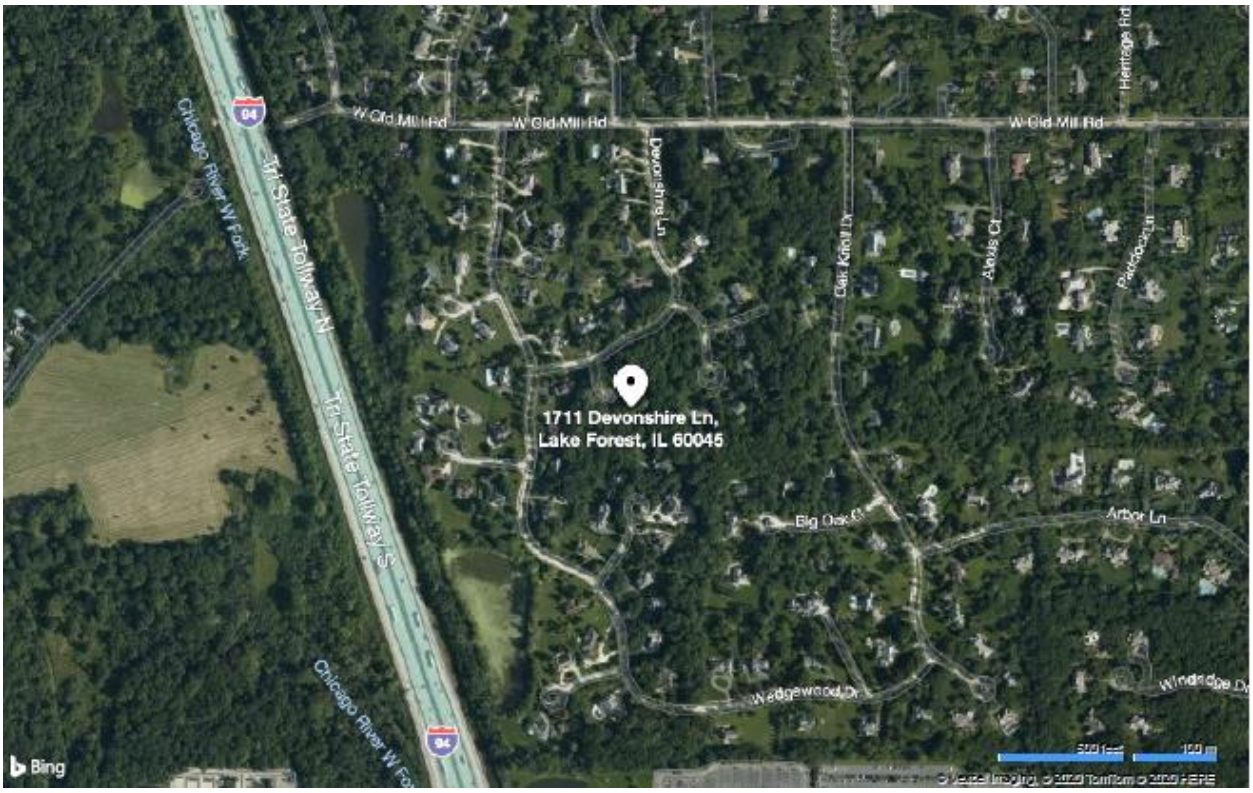
Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **GIS Location Map (Google Earth or BING)**
- **Local Location Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans (As Applicable)**
- **Photo Location Map** (Include for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

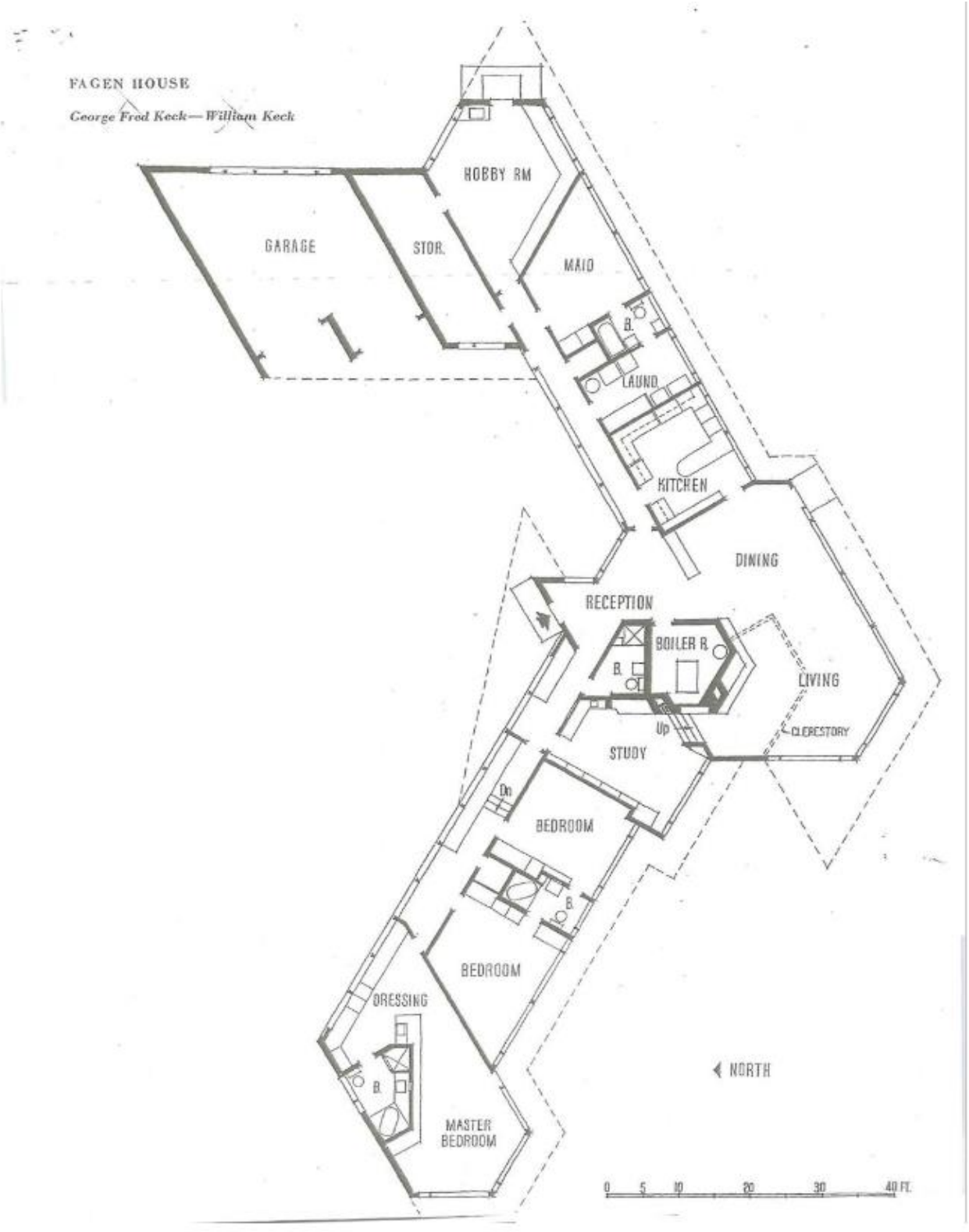
Section number 7 Page 33 NAME: Fagen, Mildred and Abel, House



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 35 NAME: Fagen, Mildred and Abel, House



Photograph Log Page

IL_Lake County_Mildred and Abel Fagen House_0001, North (front) Façade, West End, Hallway in bedroom wing, view southwest. Chris Enck, photographer, 711 Marion Avenue, Highland Park, January, 2020

IL_Lake County_Mildred and Abel Fagen House_0002, Northeast corner: West end of Front façade to left; Master bedroom wing, view south. Chris Enck, photographer, 711 Marion Avenue, Highland Park, January 2020

IL_Lake County_Mildred and Abel Fagen House_0003, Detail triangular planter in northwest corner of front façade, view southwest. Susan Benjamin, Highland Park, May, 2019

IL_Lake County_Mildred and Abel Fagen House_0004, View into reception area; front entrance to right, view south. Chris Enck, photographer, 711 Marion Avenue, Highland Park, January, 2020

IL_Lake County_Mildred and Abel Fagen House_0005, Service wing, north façade; hallway in service wing, view southwest. Chris Enck, photographer, 711 Marion Avenue, Highland Park, January, 2020

IL_Lake County_Mildred and Abel Fagen House_0006, Front façade, east end, View toward service wing and garages, view east. Chris Enck, photographer, 711 Marion Avenue, Highland Park, January, 2020

IL_Lake County_Mildred and Abel Fagen House_0007, South wall of service wing: kitchen, laundry, bathroom, maid's room, view north. Chris Enck, photographer, 711 Marion Avenue, Highland Park, January, 2020

IL_Lake County_Mildred and Abel Fagen House_0008, Corner of south wall and southwest wall of living/dining area view north. Chris Enck, photographer, 711 Marion Avenue, Highland Park, January, 2020

IL_Lake County_Mildred and Abel Fagen House_0009, South walls of children's bedroom and southeast, south and southwest walls of master bedroom, View north. Chris Enck, photographer, 711 Marion Avenue, Highland Park, January, 2020

IL_Lake County_Mildred and Abel Fagen House_0010, Pool and pool house at southeast cornerof lot, view east. Susan Benjamin, Highland Park, May, 2019

IL_Lake County_Mildred and Abel Fagen House_0011, Reception area, view south into dining area. Chris Enck, photographer, 711 Marion Avenue, Highland Park, January, 2020

IL_Lake County_Mildred and Abel Fagen House_0012, Living area, view west, showing clerestory. Susan Benjamin, Highland Park, May, 2019

IL_Lake County_Mildred and Abel Fagen House_0013, View north from living room north into study. Susan Benjamin, Highland Park, May, 2019

IL_Lake County_Mildred and Abel Fagen House_0014, hallway to bedroom, View from Master suite east toward reception hall. Susan Benjamin, Highland Park, May, 2019

IL_Lake County_Mildred and Abel Fagen House_0015, Master bedroom, southeast, south and southwest walls, view southwest. Susan Benjamin, Highland Park, May, 2019

Fagen, Mildred and Abel, House

Figures: Photographs taken by Hedrich Blessing, 1951

Figure 1, Fagen House, front façade, view east, Hedrich Blessing, 1951

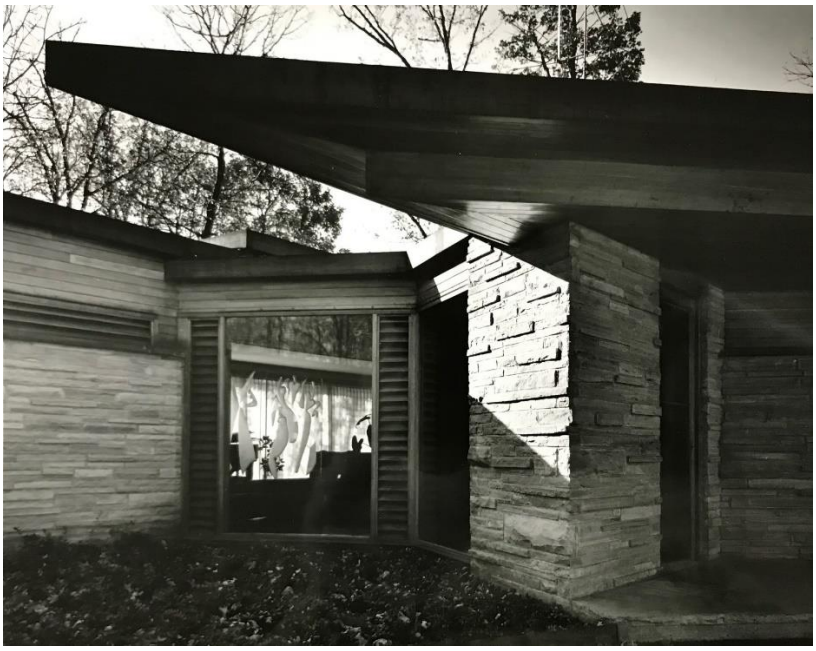


Figure 2, View into living, dining area, front entrance, Hedrich Blessing, 1951

Figure 3, south (rear) façade, view north, Hedrich Blessing, 1951

Figure 4, living dining area, view northwest toward master bedroom Hedrich Blessing, 1951,

Figure 5, master bedroom, view northeast, Hedrich Blessing, 1951

Figure 6, living dining area, view northwest toward reception area, Hedrich Blessing, 1951

Figure 7 Living area, showing clerestory, view west, Hedrich Blessing, 1951

Figure 8, Study, view south into living area, Hedrich Blessing, 1951

Figure 9, west children's bedroom, view west, Hedrich Blessing, 1951

Figure 10 Master bedroom, view west, Hedrich Blessing, 1951

IL_Lake County_Mildred and Able Fagen House_0001, North (front) Façade, West End, Hallway in bedroom wing, view southwest

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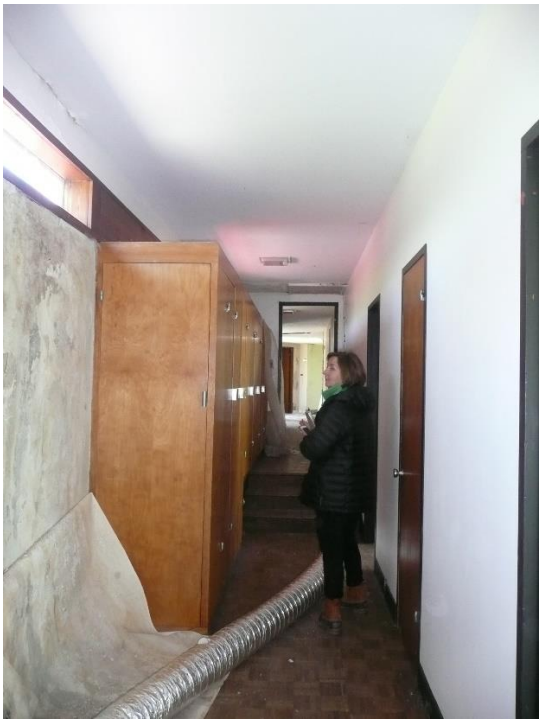

IL_Lake County_Mildred and Able Fagen House_0014, hallway to bedroom, View from Master suite east toward reception hall

IL_Lake County_Mildred and Able Fagen House_0014, Master bedroom, southeast, south and southwest walls, view southwest